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Living the *abhinaya*: Sensory-somatic approaches to *rasa-bhāva* in Odissi dance

Abstract: Odissi, one of the Indian classical dance forms, involves stylised and codified movements built upon a set of grammar and vocabularies that are interconnected with body-mind philosophy and the aesthetic theory of *bhāva* (mood, feeling, emotion) and *rasa* (essence, sentiment). In this expressive and dynamic performance a dancer internalises certain *bhāvas* within herself/himself and performs them with her/his entire body-mind to touch the audience's body-mind by evoking *rasa* in both the performer and the audience. While learning and performing, the dancers carefully attend to their psychophysical sensations alongside the socio-cultural and aesthetic influences which together create meanings for the performer, and then become a point of reference for the audience. In this paper, I discuss the sensory-somatic approaches taken by contemporary Odissi dancers to explore the transformations in training and performance methodology. Drawing from my ethnographic fieldwork in India and my personal experience as an Odissi dancer, I analyse examples from *abhinaya*, expressive dance items, to demonstrate how *rasa-bhāva* can be re-interpreted as an enactive, embodied and animated aesthetic experience of the dancer.

Key words: Odissi, Indian classical dance, *rasa-bhāva*, sensory-somatic

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1. Introduction

This paper¹ discusses the Odissi dancers' experience of *rasa-bhāva* in *abhinayas*, the narrative dance items. It explores how a dancer engages with the characters and the story, and how the emotional experience is established. I take a multidisciplinary approach in this investigation by drawing from such disciplines as performance studies, psychology, philosophy, cognitive science, dance studies and dance anthropology. Firstly, I define what *rasa-bhāva* and *abhinaya* mean and how I understand the terms 'sensory-somatic,' 'embodied,' 'animated' and 'enactive.' Then, I analyse examples of Odissi dancers' experience of *bhāva and rasa*, and discuss the socio-cultural shifts in the learning and performing methodology of *abhinaya* in Odissi. Altogether, I intend to engage with the chosen contemporary Odissi dancer's sensory-somatic experience in the aesthetic performance of Odissi dance.

2. Setting the scene:

Definitions and methodology

Rasa-bhāva is an aesthetic theory based on a body-mind philosophy that is mentioned in the *Nāṭyaśāstra*, an ancient treatise on Indian dramaturgy believed to have been compiled by the sage Bharata around the 5th century BCE (GHOSH 2002). *Bhāva* is translated as 'mood,' 'feeling,' 'emotion' and *rasa* as 'essence' or 'taste.' According to Abhinavagupta, who is known to have provided the most exhaustive commentaries of *Nāṭyaśāstra*, the *rasa* and *bhāva* are strictly cognitive aesthetic experiences of the spectator (BARLINGAY 1981: 446). However, *rasa-bhāva* is an essential part of the Odissi *abhinaya*, the narrative dance item. The Sanskrit word *abhinaya* consists of two segments; the prefix *abhi* means 'towards' and the root *ni* is 'to lead' (GHOSH 2002: 150–151). The word implies to lead towards *rasa*, the ultimate bliss, the aesthetic experience. In Odissi, the dancer, through hand gestures, facial expressions, movements (*āṅgika abhinaya*) and alongside the music and lyrics of the song (*vācika abhinaya*), costume (*āhārya abhinaya*) and involuntary psychophysical expressions (*sāttvika abhinaya*), enacts stories and expresses emotions. Hence, from a dancer's perspective, in this expressive and dynamic performance a dancer internalises certain *bhāvas* within herself/himself and performs them with her/his entire body-mind to touch

¹ This study is part of my doctoral research in Drama at the University of Exeter, UK. This paper is an adapted version of a section from my thesis.

the audience's body-mind by evoking *rasa* in both the audience and the performer. *Bhāva* thus is not just an emotion or feeling, but as the performance studies scholar, Phillip Zarrilli defines it, it is "an optimal state of being-doing" (ZARRILLI 2011: 255) in the process of becoming a character. According to the dance scholar, Kapila Vatsyayan, *rasa-bhāva* belongs to both the creator and experiencer, the artist alone and the audience (VATSYAYAN 2004: 83). S.S. Barlingay, an Indian philosopher, proposes that *rasa* is not a mental aesthetic consciousness but a medium, a language of staging that embraces an audio-visual experience that comes close to cinematographic film (BARLINGAY 1981: 452). Moreover, Sreenath Nair has proposed the theory of synesthetics that details the neural, sensory and embodied correlation between the metaphoric perception of *rasa* and emotional expression (NAIR 2013). Taking these selected interpretations of *rasa-bhāva* further, I draw from my ethnographic fieldwork in India with Odissi dancers: Aruna Mohanty from ODA (Orissa Dance Academy), and Sujata Mohapatra from Srjan in Bhubaneswar, Sharon Lowen from Delhi and Sharmila Biswas from OVM (Odissi Vision and Movement Centre) in Kolkata, to demonstrate how *rasa* and *bhāva* can be interpreted as sensory-somatic states and experiences that are embodied, animated and enactive.

For the purpose of my doctoral thesis (SWETA 2016), I have coined the term 'sensory-somatic' by which I understand a dynamic and creative semiotic process, continuously in formation, through movements, postures, gestures, breath, energy, the geometry of the form, music, lyrics, images and sensations that the dancer creates and experiences in space and time along with the integration of senses within the body-mind complex situated in a socio-cultural milieu. This experience is simultaneously linked with the production of meaning for the dancer herself/himself and the audience, which is referred to as semiosis. I use the term 'embodied' to stress the lived sensory-somatic aspect of the performative experience of *rasa-bhāva*. According to the philosopher, Mark Johnson:

Human meaning is embodied. From the moment of our entrance into the world, and apparently even in the womb, we begin to learn the meaning of things at the most primordial bodily level. Things are meaningful by virtue of their relations to other actual or possible qualities, feelings, emotions, images, image schemas, and concepts.

JOHNSON 2007: 279

I suggest that Odissi dance is an experience unfolding a sensory-somatic semiosis or meaning-making. My proposal of this semiotic experience is based on the function of multi-sensory semiosis, which, according to anthropologist Brenda Farnell, is “a process of agentic embodied meaning-making afforded by the modalities of taste, hearing, touch, pain, smell, sight, and kinesthesia in various relationships with talk and other bodily action” (Farnell 2003: 135). I also draw from the dancer and philosopher, Maxine Sheets-Johnstone’s concept of “animated form,” where she stresses the kinesthetic consciousness, that is, the thinking and feeling in movement (SHEETS-JOHNSTONE 1999). In addition, I follow the concept of enactivism, introduced to cognitive science by FRANCISCO VARELA, EVAN THOMPSON and ELEANOR ROSCH (1991), who propose that cognition is based on the interaction between the organism and the environment, not the work of the mind alone (VARELA *et.al.* 1991: 9).

3. The *Odissi* dancer’s experience of *bhāva* in *abhinaya*

The *āṅgika abhinaya*, the gestures and movements of the entire body-mind, are the fundamental tools of expression and also experience in Indian classical dance. This can be approached as the codified body language, which is learned through imitation and repetition, and that in the long term training is believed to generate the appropriate *bhāva*. But the Odissi dancers I have worked with base their expressions on their immediate and spontaneous sensory responses they feel while they enact the gestures and moves. For instance, Sujata Mohapatra says in *Brojaku Choda*, an Oriya song: “When I keep the baby, I really feel the weight of the baby and the care of the baby, to put it. So, the movement definitely evokes emotion. When I bring it down, the way I lift it, you will feel it is a baby” (MOHAPATRO 2014). Her movements and gestures are not only communicative to the audience but also part of her emotional experience that she undergoes. Here she proves the phenomenologist Merleau Ponty’s statement that “gestures are not only productive of communication between agents, they also provide the individual agent with a private somatic experience of his or her own moving body” (PONTY in NOLAND and NESS 2008: xi).

Bhāva is experienced as a conscious emotional state of being-doing of a performer. According to Sharon Lowen, “You don’t pretend to feel it. You feel it” (LOWEN 2014). Here she speaks about feeling the emotion in a manner which is almost close to really feeling it in life. With a similar approach Aruna Mohanty explains her intensive emotional engagement:

How I feel, how strongly I feel about it that determines the coming out of the *bhāva*. I cannot portray the emotion unless I feel it deep down inside my heart. It should be that my heart is filled with that emotion as if I am going to be choked.

MOHANTY 2013

So, for Mohanty and Lowen, *bhāva* is an honest emotional psycho-somatic experience that they live, undergo at the moment of performing and sharing with the audience. This understanding appears to overlap with the concept of *bhāva*, which is a “state of being-doing” of a performer (ZARRILLI 1987) with the western understanding of emotion, that is “a strong feeling deriving from one’s circumstances, mood, or relationships with others” (*Oxford Dictionaries*, 2004: n.p.). The lived experience is thus brought onto the performative moment. Dancers believe that emotions are embodied feelings (JAMES 1884; DAMASIO 2000; PRINZ 2005; NIEDENTHAL 2007) or enactive as defined by COLOMBETTI and THOMPSON (2008).

Another sensory-somatic possibility of establishing and experiencing *bhāva* is through kinesthesia, the sense of movement and touch. While performing an *abhinaya*, the environment and the characters in the story are established by the moving body-mind of the dancer. When I perform *Ramate Yamuna pulina vane* (an *abhinaya* I learned from Mohanty), I create the bank of the river, the trees and creepers as I relate to them through touching and moving them within the performative space of the stage or dance studio. Similarly, the characters of Rādhā, Kṛṣṇa or Sakhi, despite being imaginary, become “visible” and “alive” through the dancer’s tactile and kinesthetic relationship developed with them. Mohanty illustrates this with an example:

I feel so affectionate when I do this action, as if I am engulfing her face, as if there is a small beautiful lotus like face in my hand and I look at her and I am in love with her. You know *that action makes me feel as if the person is there and I have her*. So, sometime that action makes me feel like that, close to, it connects completely. But then again I ask myself, *because I am thinking she is there and I am holding her face*.

MOHANTY 2013; italics mine

I share a similar experience when I personally perform this dance item. An enactive process takes place. The characters or the environment are created at the very moment of dancing, while the dancer’s body-mind forms

relationships, gets in contact with the imaginary environment. Mohanty points to how the *bhāva* is simultaneously established through her kinaesthetic and tactile action and the thinking.

Sensory memory and visualisation are other sensory-somatic methods of establishing the *bhāva* in the performer. Mohanty asked me to draw from my personal sensory memory of the experience of being touched, embraced or kissed by a loved one and to visualise such experiences so as to arouse the psychophysical feeling in *rati bhāva* (love). At the same time, she reminded me to retain the image of the cowherdess Rādhā and the cowherd Kṛṣṇa in my performance. This helped me in generating a lived experience of the *bhāva* within the frame of the traditional story. These examples demonstrate that *bhāva* is not simply an expression of emotions or moods but the thinking-feeling, the sentient body-mind's emotional experience that a dancer undergoes at the moment of dancing.

In this agentic method, to bring one's own expression of the storyline one has to add her or his personal sensory-somatic interpretation of the choreographed sequences of movements, because, as Lowen states:

They [*gurus*] have already analysed, interpreted, understood, brought it out and then it is a question of whether you can understand their intention and then you can understand more, deeper, wider, whatever. So that you can bring what you have to offer to it. You are using that choreographic structure and even the *abhinaya* structure but it has to be unique to you. So, here you have the score given to you by your *guru* so you have got movement and interpretation of text and *sancharis* but still there is a lot that you have to bring in to it and it will be different all the time.

LOWEN 2014

The continuous presence of the “self” or one's personality, although in the background or as a shadow, promotes the concept of agency. Taking Brenda Farnell's agentic approach to social theory, I see Odissi dancers as “dynamically embodied persons” (FARNELL 2012: 2). The “self” is present through the experience and memory of one's personal life and socio-cultural influence, which is a vital source in *abhinaya*.

4. Dancing with the audience: Odissi dancers' experience of *rasa*

Abhinavagupta in his interpretation has reserved the *rasa* experience for the spectator alone (MISRA 2004: 324). In contrast to Abhinavagupta's stance, Vatsyayan claims that Bharata expounds on the artistic experience that is "a-causal and whole, a state of beatitude and bliss in the mind of the experienter, the creator," which belongs to both the artist and the audience (VATSYAYAN 2004: 83). Cooper has suggested that the *rasa* process is alchemical as "the precise interaction of the preparation of the performer and the disposition of the spectator can generate *rasa*" (COOPER 2013: 340). Moreover, she speaks about the *rasa-bhāva* process as "access points" embodied by the performer, which leads the spectator to experience *rasa* (COOPER 2013: 346). For the Odissi dancer, Sujata Mohapatra, the *rasa-bhāva* experience is as follows:

It [body movement or *angika abhinaya*] gives you the first step to bring the *rasa*. It is the only thing you use. So, the first thing you hold the baby, the *mudra* helped you. Then that inside *rasa*, after holding, the feeling that comes to you, that is the *bhāva*. When you put it back, how it reaches the public that becomes *rasa*.

MOHAPATRA 2014

Mohapatra explains her own understanding of the *rasa-bhāva* process, where she states the body movement is the starting point that leads to the *bhāva*, which she equals to the "inside *rasa*" that comes before the audience is offered the experience of *rasa*. Without downplaying the *rasa* experience of the audience she points to her own experience which becomes essential for the audience. Here she indicates the essential aspect of the performative theory of *rasa*, that is, the audience-performer relationship. As Nair explains, "the audience-actor relationship is like a chromosome pairing making the physical body of the performer complete, meaningful, and enjoyable" (NAIR 2015: 150). Biswas also acknowledges the equal importance of the dancer's and the spectator's experience:

It [*rasa*] is caused by both body and mental engagement in the dancer. The audience is also a part of it, when I talk about the vibration that's very important. The audience experiences the *rasa* through mental, visual and also bodily sensations of movement and it depends on the dancer.

BISWAS 2014

Biswas brings up the notion of the kinesthetic-cognitive aspect of establishing the *rasa* experience in the dancer as well as in the spectator. This resonates with Montero's notion of proprioception as an aesthetic sense, where observers can "proprioceive the beauty of another's movement" through the function of mirror neurons (MONTERO 2006: 231). In a similar vein, Erin B. Mee has discussed the process of *rasa* as an "emotional contagion" which "involves the recognition of emotion through neural mirroring and conscious and unconscious physical mimicry, which leads to an empathic engagement and finally to emotional contagion" (MEE 2015: 169). This understanding is directly reflected by 72% of Odissi dancers who participated in a survey I conducted as part of my PhD research [the research took place from 2012 to 2016 and the survey explored the dancer's experience of body-mind relation in Odissi dance]. The dancers stated that when they watch a familiar dance as spectators, they feel the movements in their body as if they were dancing but do not move or partly move their hands, heads or other part of the body. This comes to prove Montero's claim: the audience not only "proprioceive" the beauty but also sense the total psychophysical state of the dancer. Turning the attention back to the performer, Mohanty explains how the spectator becomes indispensable in the dancer's experience of *rasa*, which is reciprocal:

When I perform I always feel that I am getting a very positive vibe and blessings. Very seldom do I feel the negative vibe. It is to give and let you live a life full of happiness, and you also give that. There is a reciprocation of that happiness and life force. You take life from them and you give life to them.

MOHANTY 2013

In this view, the *rasa-bhāva* process binds the spectator and the dancer sensory-somatically in a mutually conducive experience, which for Mohanty generates a "life force" in the form of happiness. She implies the importance of the audience's presence in shaping the experience of the performance moment.

In relation to the spectator's *rasānubhāva* (*rasa* experience), Misra explains that *rasa* "produces *alaukika ānanda* or bliss" which means 'an uncommon and beyond ordinary state,' which is "an enrichment of one's sensibility" (MISRA 2011: 386). Lowen explains this in the context of Odissi dance:

Since the dance comes out of the spiritual consciousness Indian classical dance uniquely allows the artist the choice of creating a sacred space, of offering a *darśan* to the audience, of taking

people out of their selfishness, with pleasure and to have a glimpse of something that is closer to an ultimate oneness.

LOWEN 2014

Lowen demonstrates the *rasa* experience or relish by the *sahrdaya*, the sensitive spectator, in line with Abhinavagupta's interpretation, which "consists of a superwordly delight" (WALIMBE 1980: 61) and is "a blissful state of mind, comparable to the enjoyment of *Brahman*" (MISRA 2011: 384). At the same time, Lowen also indicates the dancer's highest aesthetic experience in dancing:

It is a great pleasure. It's not only a pleasure to reach out and communicate and share with a large number of people a very intimate connection that is safe in sharing because of the magic wall or screen. The thing is that there are times when it is more than a pleasure. Those times when everything goes well, I call it a feeling of flying. Although it is what everybody is calling flow, when everything is just right. And it is not just a pleasure but joy and feels like flying. It is like you are levitating, you are off the ground.

LOWEN 2014

At the moment of dancing, Lowen herself experiences an "extra-daily" state, using Barba and Savarese's term (BARBA and SAVARESE 2006: 7), which could be defined with the same words as aesthetic bliss and *alaukika ānanda* that are used for describing the spectator's experience. Catalano also notes that instead of using the term *rasa* the Odissi dancers speak about *ānanda* and also *mokṣa* and *śakti* (CATALANO 2014: 283). What remains unique for the dancer, however, is the embodied, enactive and animated facet of this state. In Lowen's account, the experience is kinesthetic as a movement that is like flying and tactile in the sense of losing touch with the ground and change of gravity. She refers to this experience as flow which Csikszentmihalyi defines as "the state in which people are so involved in an activity that nothing else seems to matter" (CSIKSZENTMIHALYI 1994: 5). Yet, Lowen states that it happens only when "everything goes well," "everything is just right," which refers to the totality of her *abhinaya*. How can one remain sensory-somatically attentive to one's activity yet enjoy the experience of "flow"? Taking a body-mind approach, Colombetti explains this as the state of "uninterrupted absorption," when:

one does not forget one's body but rather one lives it through, pre-reflectively, as actively immersed in a demanding but not

overpowering pursuit; this condition involves a dynamical inter-play of foreground and background bodily feelings [...] [It is] the experience of being absorbed in an activity not merely as a case of bodily forgetfulness an inconspicuousness, but as a richer or better thicker experience in which one's body can be felt 'at the back' as well as 'at the front' of awareness.

COLOMBETTI 2011: 28–29

According to Colombetti, the foreground and background bodily feelings are pre-reflective and subjective bodily self-awareness that contributes to the emotion experience (COLOMBETTI 2011: 30). Thus, for Lowen, “everything is just right” when she balances the *angika abhinaya* and the *bhāvas* in between the foreground and background bodily self-awareness, as her body-mind flows in the *rasa* experience. This is also based on the extensive training experience, which gives the confidence to perform the dance “well” because of the knowledge and technique which has been habituated through repetition and a sensory-somatic approach:

It is only through the daily in-body routine and discipline that he can develop the physical skills for the correct doing: balance, control, flexibility, stamina and correct form. When he has reached this stage of external accomplishment, he can allow the form to ‘drop away’ from his consciousness. And only then can the form become absorbed in the interior process of mental and spiritual awakening, an awakening which must accompany physical centring and release in order to direct energy and power through movement.

ZARRILLI 1984: 205

Zarrilli speaks about the disciplined and routine practice which ultimately enables one to experience Lowen's “flow” or Colombetti's state of “uninterrupted absorption.”

The examples presented in this section show that Odissi dancers themselves experience *rasa* sensory-somatically, and simultaneously provide access to it to the audience. The audience also play an essential role in the experience of *rasa*, which affects the performer. The *rasa-bhāva* experience in Odissi dance could be defined as the “dynamic embodied/enactive psychophysiological process by means of which a (theatrical) world is made available at the moment of its appearance/experience for both the actors and audience (ZARRILLI *et al.* 2013: 23). From the dancers' perspective, *rasa* is simultaneously experienced somatically and mentally. It may take various shades

depending on the individual dancers yet what binds them is a constant aspiration for harnessing the total body-mind and experiencing the extra mundane reality through an embodied aesthetic consciousness. In this experience the audience and the dancer remain in a mutually conducive sensory-somatic relationship which enables the arousal of *rasa* experience.

5. Shifts in the *abhinaya* training and performing methodology

This is how Sanjukta Panigrahi, probably the first Odissi dancer to venture with Odissi dance outside of the traditional parameters, explains the gist of the traditional training system to the participants of a session organised by International School of Theatre Anthropology (ISTA)²:

You see, in India we start learning dance when we are four or five years old. *You don't know what your body is, you cannot feel your body, you don't know your mind.* You learn from a guru, I won't call him a teacher, he is a guru... a master teacher. You just follow him *like a parrot, you imitate* what he does. *You do not understand the meaning of the dance*, where you are bending, where you are taking the stress, or where the tensions are in your body. You merely *repeat* the same position exactly every time you do them. *You follow as if you were blind.* We call it *guru-shishya parampara*, to hand down from teacher to pupil.

PANIGRAHI in JENKINS and WATSON 2002: 68; italics mine

Moving away from this traditional *guru-śiṣya paramparā*, the teacher – disciple tradition, the sensory-somatic approaches taken by Odissi dancers are modifying earlier teaching methods. First of all, instead of imitation and repetition following a teacher's and universalised presentation of each *abhinaya*, the stress is given on to an individual and critical, self-reflective approach. Biswas explains the relationship between the codified expression and the felt expressions:

If you look at these things together [codified facial expressions] they can evoke that feeling but that has to be in touch with your inner feeling and that makes it honest. If I do this movement [she shows *vari vahe*, one of the codified usage of *pataka hasta mudra*],

² ISTA, conceived and directed by Eugenio Barba, is a multicultural and international network of performers and researchers.

is this giving me the feeling of rain? If it doesn't, then we have the liberty to reject it. See movements, *hasta mudras* are extensions of the feeling. Now it has been codified but one thing about grammar, you have to keep looking back, keep researching to see if it is an honest expression. Are you doing it because it is all written in the book or are you doing after finding the connections? If you don't, then it is not truth. You are speaking a language which you do not understand yourself. And if you do not understand yourself then others will not understand.

BISWAS 2015

She advocates the truth, honesty and understanding of the action, and links it with the felt emotion, not just an enaction of disconnected gestures. Biswas and Mohanty both advocate a personal understanding and a total involvement of one's self. Mohanty explains: "Some people don't touch you because it is borrowed. It is very robotic. You have to make it your own, then only you will be able to emote" (MOHANTY 2013).

In this, we also encounter a socio-cultural shift from the teacher's absolute authority towards a greater agency of the performer. Cooper notes that the dancer's agency lies in the embodied and personal internalisation of the Odissi dance:

the agency of that dancer lies in his or her capacity subtly to alter those movements, at the simplest of levels, not only by how she performs the movement, individually, but also by how she places and uses that particular movement, within the context of performance. [...] knowledge is derived from the internalization and embodiment of a particular individual who further interrogates his/her expressive practice in rehearsal.

COOPER 2013: 344

By taking such approaches, these contemporary dancers are putting the emphasis on the student's self-reflective engagement with the *abhinaya*. After having taught me the basic framework of the *abhinaya*, Mohanty gave me the freedom to practise it on my own terms, bring changes accordingly to make it truthful to my personal understanding and feeling. This enabled me to engage with the *abhinaya* on a deeper sensory-somatic level. While performing, after a playful painting of Rādhā's feet, after getting aroused by touching her soft and tender feet, I finally place it on my heart alongside a deep breath of satisfaction and excitement. This entire sensory-somatic development enables me to become totally engrossed in the *rati bhāva* ('love').

6. Conclusion

The contemporary Odissi dancers' experience of *rasa-bhāva* is enactive, embodied and animated because of the liberty given to questioning the tradition, a self-exploratory and critical approach, and the engagement with Odissi dance on a deeper, psychophysical and personal level. This enables the extension of *rasa-bhāva* beyond its theoretical assumptions as a solely mental entity. In this sensory-somatic approach to Odissi dance, the *abhinaya* is basically lived. It is real and it is honest, within the imagined, invented reality of the performance set up by the audience and the performer. *Abhinaya* is intangible yet tangible and present only at the moment of performing it. Ultimately, what it offers is that the engagement with *abhinaya* becomes a more meaningful enactment and a greater aesthetical experience for both the performer and the audience. This enactive and embodied realisation and sensory-somatic semiosis in *rasa-bhāva* provide a pathway to lived and meaningful experience that goes beyond representation of a mythological world.

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Streszczenie: Odissi, jedna z klasycznych form tańca indyjskiego, obejmuje stylizowane i skodyfikowane ruchy, które można opisać, posiłkując się pojęciami gramatycznymi i słownictwem związanym z filozofią ciała-umysłu oraz teorią estetyczną *bhāva-rasa* (od *bhāva* 'nastrój, uczucie, emocje' i *rasa* 'esencja, sentyment'). Poprzez pełne ekspresji, dynamiczne wykonanie tańca tancerka Odissi uwewnętrznia pewne rodzaje *bhāva* i wykorzystuje całe swoje ciało-umysł, aby dotrzeć do ciała-umysłów swoich widzów. Taniec Odissi wywołuje więc jakieś *rasa* zarówno u osób, które go wykonują, jak i u publiczności. Poprzez naukę tańca i kultywowanie tej tradycji, adepci Odissi z uwagą wsłuchują się w swoje psychofizyczne odczucia, które wraz z kontekstem społeczno-kulturowym i estetycznym nadają wykonaniu tańca konkretny sens, a ten następnie staje się punktem odniesienia dla publiczności. Omawiając różnorakie podejścia sensoryczno-somatyczne stosowane przez współczesnych wykonawców Odissi, autorka bada przemiany zachodzące w metodyce treningu i realizacji tańca. Na podstawie przeprowadzonych przez siebie w Indiach terenowych badań etnograficznych oraz bazując na swoich osobistych doświadczeniach jako tancerki Odissi, autorka analizuje przykłady z *abhinaya*, pełnych ekspresji elementów tańca, i próbuje wykazać, że *rasa-bhāva* może być interpretowane jako enaktywne, ucieleśnione i wyrażone poprzez ruch doświadczenie estetyczne tancerza.

Słowa kluczowe: *Odissi*, klasyczny taniec indyjski, *rasa-bhāva*, sensoryczno-somatyczne doświadczenie